

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 01100 141229Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-02
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 ACDA-10 OMB-01 /076 W
-----141233Z 033021 /12

O R 141202Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4881
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 1100

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, IS, LE
SUBJECT: ISRAELI CABINET DISCUSSES NABATIYA

REF: TEL AVIV 1007

1. THE CABINET COMMUNIQUE ISSUED FEBRUARY 13 AFTER THE WEEKLY CABINET MEETING CONTAINED THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS REGARDING THE CABINET'S DISCUSSION OF NABATIYA: BEGIN TEXT: THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS REVIEWED THE SEQUENCE OF THE DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS HELD SINCE A SYRIAN FORCE MOVED SOUTHWARD TO THE VICINITY OF NABATIYA.
 2. THE DIRECTOR OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE REVIEWED THE SITUATION CREATED ON THE GROUND WITH THE COMMENCEMENT OF THIS FORCE'S MOVE NORTHWARD.
 3. SUMMING UP THE SITUATION, THE PRIME MINISTER LAID EMPHASIS
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 01100 141229Z

ON COMMENCEMENT OF THE SYRIAN FORCES' MOVE NORTHWARD FROM THE VICINITY OF NABATIYA. REMARKING THAT THIS WAS UNDOUBTEDLY AN ACHIEVEMENT BENEFITING ALL FACTORS CONCERNED, THE PRIME MINISTER STATED THAT THIS ACHIEVEMENT PROVED THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE POLICY PURSUED BY ISRAEL EVER SINCE THE OUTBREAK OF THE CIVIL WAR IN LEBANON. HE NOTED THAT THIS POLICY, THAT HAD BEEN BOTH

BALANCED AND FIRM, HAD PROVED ITSELF, AND THAT ISRAEL'S CONSISTENT DIPLOMATIC EFFORT HAD BORNE FRUIT. THE PRIME MINISTER LAUDED THE UNITED STATES FOR THE MANNER IN WHICH IT HAD PLAYED A ROLE ON THE SUBJECT.

4. AT THE SAME TIME, IT SHOULD BE NOTED--THE PRIME MINISTER SAID--THAT NOT ALL SYRIAN FORCES IN THAT AREA HAD YET BEEN SHIFTED NORTHWARD. THE FURTHER DEALING WITH THIS ISSUE WOULD BE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VISIT TO THE REGION.

5. THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE STATED THAT THESE DEVELOPMENTS CAN AND SHOULD HELP IN PACIFYING SPIRITS IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. END TEXT.

6. NABATIYA AND THE PRESENCE THERE OF SYRIAN FORCES CONTINUES TO BE A MAJOR ITEM IN THE ISRAELI PRESS AND IS GIVEN FRONT-PAGE HEADLINE TREATMENT IN MOST PAPERS. MOST REPORTING OF THE CABINET'S DISCUSSION OF THE NABATIYA CRISIS REFLECTS RELIEF, ALTHOUGH THE JERUSALEM POST SAYS THAT NEW PROBLEMS ARE LIKELY TO DELAY THE RESOLUTION OF THE CRISIS. THE POST IS ALSO UNIQUE IN DRAWING MORE DEFINITELY THAN OTHER PAPERS THE DEMARCATION OF THE ISRAELI "RED LINE"; THE POST SAYS THE LINE "IS GENERALLY BELIEVED TO STRETCH APPROXIMATELY FROM SIDON (ON THE MEDITERRANEAN) TO JEZZIN (ABOUT 15 KILOMETERS NORTH OF NABATIYA)." DUNNIGAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, COMMUNIQES, TROOP REDUCTIONS, MILITARY OCCUPIED AREAS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 14-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977TELAV01100
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770051-1021
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770243/aaaablbx.tel
Line Count: 88
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1e51cec6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 TEL AVIV 1007
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3325544
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ISRAELI CABINET DISCUSSES NABATIYA
TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, IS, LE, SY
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1e51cec6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009